

Visiting Pioneer

Angie Mason

Wrapped tight in a red capote
I drank campfire coffee
and watched you spend the morning
throwing lead down range.
You measured powder charge,

shoved patch and ball into
muzzle. You aimed at targets
welded by your own hands
while I winced with each puff
of smoke.

Your favorite flintlock, walnut
stock, stained deep brown, brass
tacks punched into its handle,
forever waiting for me in your tent
should I manifest a desire to shoot.

On rendezvous weekends like this
I felt like a visiting pioneer.
A time traveler in a \$2 thrift
store skirt. I felt like Laura
from Little House.

I felt like churning butter
or making soap from ash.
I loved you the most
on these days. I loved how
authentic the imitation

strove to be. You would
have been a different father
in 1870. There would have been
fewer versions of you
to reconcile.